

REMARKS

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejection of claims 14 and 16, and under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Ilbery, et al. (U.S. Patent 6,476,934).

Claim, 14 has ben canceled. Claim 16 has been amended to incorporate the language of Claim 12 therein, the language of which has been determined to be allowable.

Applicants' invention, as depicted in Figure 1 of the application, shows an embodiment of the invention and illustrates how an image is divided into a *local region of interest* (ROI) and its neighborhood. The computations for a given pixel are based upon the ROI and its neighborhood. In Applicants' invention, an ROI is chosen from an input image. The region can be a window of varying dimensions. The neighborhood of the ROI includes additional image pixels from which statistical information is obtained. The image pixel values within the ROI are transformed to binary values and placed in corresponding positions in the output image according to the method described in Figures 2 and 3.

This summary of Applicants' invention clearly defines the critical difference between the prior art references and the present invention. As specifically set forth in the summary above and the specification on pages 5 and 6, et al., Applicants are providing a binary digital image output. As noted above, the input may be gray scale, but the output is binary. The prior art output of Ilbery et al. is a gray scale image. This prior art disclosure is diametrically opposite that of the present invention. Applicants have set forth specific rules to follow to reorder their pixels.

The differences between Claim 16 and Ilbery, et al. resides in the processing that is performed. Applicants perform different processing steps to obtain a binary output. This distinguishing feature is present in Claim 1 et al.

The reference to Ilbery, et al. processes an image pixel by pixel, and uses a neighborhood region and produces an output. In Ilbery, et al., processing a pixel depends upon results of previously processed pixels. This is a necessity for their invention because the purpose is to compensate for output errors of previously processed pixels in order to make the final result more accurate. This type of operation must be done sequentially. Applicants' invention involves using a neighborhood, but does not use the output results of previously processed pixels, so it is not a sequential operation. The details in Ilbery, et al. of what processing is performed are completely different and much of the patent explains this in detail.

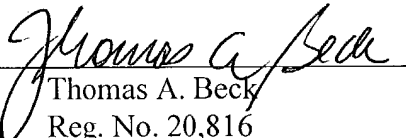
Accordingly, the nature of the processing is an important issue; not just that some processing is done and that some decisions are made. The processing as among the prior art references and Applicants' invention is totally different. The mention of "halftoning" does not warrant rendering Applicants' invention obvious. Applicants scan both half tone and text. Halftoning is only a part of their invention whereas the reproduction of a scanned halftone image is the sole focus of Ilbery, et al. Applicants' invention deals with reproduction of scanned images containing text, line art and halftoned images. Applicants' invention is not specifically designed to be extremely accurate in reproducing the light and dark halftoned regions as in Ilbery et al.

Applicants submit that Claim 16 as presently written is in a form which should result in its allowability.

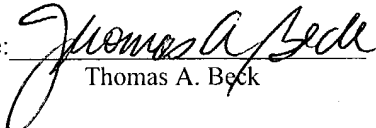
If there are any charges associated with the amendment of Claim 16, please charge such fee(s) to Deposit Account 50-0510.

In view of the arguments and modifications to the claims, allowance of this case is warranted. Such favorable action is respectfully solicited.

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